

## REVIEWS

### PRACTICAL CHEMISTRY FOR MEDICAL STUDENTS. By William Klyne.

Pp. 460. 1946. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 20s.

THIS book covers the pre-registration and first-year medical courses in chemistry, and is based on the present medical curriculum in the University of Edinburgh. Though the book is not intended to cover bio-chemistry, the author is university lecturer in bio-chemistry, and is therefore in a good position to judge which parts of the chemistry course should be stressed as being specially important for the medical curriculum. He has been careful to keep the balance between the study of chemistry as a science and a training in deduction and logical thinking on the one hand, and the application of chemistry to practical medicine on the other. The title of the book does not do justice to the large amount of theoretical explanatory matter which precedes the various experiments and prevents the practical work from being mere "cookery."

The practical instructions for the individual tests are given concisely and clearly with due regard to safety precautions, economy of material, and the limitations imposed by large classes. Special stress is laid on the importance of control tests. The book starts with a valuable chapter on scientific method, and goes on to deal very briefly with fundamental points such as experimental error, accuracy of results, and statistical method. This is followed by a section on general rules for laboratory work, including safety precautions and methods of cleaning and calibrating apparatus. In connection with the last point, it is stated that Ostwald pipettes, calibrated for delivery, are used like ordinary type pipettes. The author has not made it clear that most Ostwald delivery pipettes are calibrated to be used by blowing out the last drop and not, as with ordinary pipettes, by merely draining. Neglect of this point could lead to quite a substantial error with a small pipette.

A possible criticism of this book is that it contains far more experiments than can be done in the time available for chemistry in the medical curriculum, and while the author may feel that the ideal curriculum should make room for the whole of the work described, it seems unlikely that the time devoted to chemistry can be increased, especially as new subjects, such as normal psychology, are creeping into the pre-clinical period. The author admits that, at present, a selection must be made from the experiments described, but one feels that a more balanced course might result if the author himself made this selection in writing his book. Moreover, the unfortunate medical students would not then be faced with still another textbook containing far more than they are expected to know or even to read. Students often complain of this, and have even been known to cut out the "important" parts of their larger textbooks in order to make a scrapbook of more reasonable size for revision. The purely chemical part might be somewhat shortened, and the sections dealing with topics such as the reactions of proteins and the spectroscopy of blood pigments might be drastically curtailed, since they are dealt with later in the bio-chemistry classes. Apart from this criticism of length, the book is excellent. It is well arranged, with a good index and numerous cross references, and, for a first edition, miraculously free from misprints. All teachers of elementary chemistry would find it well worth while to read this book, and medical graduates wishing to refresh their knowledge of the fundamentals of modern chemistry and the scientific basis of some of the tests they use, would do well to read through many of the chapters.

D. C. H.

### THE RESULTS OF RADIUM AND X-RAY THERAPY IN MALIGNANT DISEASE. Second Statistical Report from The Holt Radium Institute, Manchester, 1934-38. Compiled 1945. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd., Teviot Place. 7s. 6d.

THIS second report from the Holt Radium Institute, Manchester, giving a full statistical report of their cases treated by radium, X-rays, and a combination of both methods during the years 1934-38, is a fuller and more comprehensive report than the original one.

The report is eminently suitable for any practitioner who is interested in statistical records of radiation therapy of any kind of cancer amenable to this treatment.

It is a melancholy fact that of the complete range of malignant disease in various parts of the body, only a very small group come within the scope of radiation therapy, and these are all easily accessible, and in most cases are lesions of the surface of the body or organs in easily accessible parts.

The survey demonstrates very clearly the great benefits which can be obtained by the concentration of all forms of radiation treatment in one centre, with adequate staff and facilities for research. It also reveals the great importance of a complete and effective follow-up system in all cases which have been treated at the centre.

The tabular results for cancer in various sites are given in full detail, and show a progressive improvement as a result of better technique, better methods of approach, and better facilities for measuring the amount of radiation given throughout the tumour area. The statistics have obviously been very accurately compiled, and actuarial assistance has been obtained in making the tables as accurate as possible.

It is impossible in a short revue of this report to summarize even shortly the results which have been obtained at this centre. Part I is a general survey which is intended for the general reader and for the practitioner who wishes to obtain a general survey of the present position in regard to the treatment of cancer by radiation. Part II is a detailed report for medical readers, and particularly for those engaged in the treatment of cancer; while Part III is a ten-year evaluation period for the years 1932-43, a most interesting study. The report is well worth studying by those consultants and specialists who may be called upon to employ radium from time to time in the treatment of the various forms of cancer.

It is gratifying to note that so much insistence is placed on the need for further research as an essential part of the constant effort to improve the methods of treatment.

The report may also prove of considerable value to the educated layman, who wants to know more of the facts about cancer and the modern methods of treatment by radiation.

Finally, the importance of early recognition of cancer is stressed as being of vital importance, and the tables show conclusively that the survival rate for the treatment of early cancer is high, and that most early cancers in accessible sites are curable.

The book is well produced. The diagrams and tables are clear and easily understood, while the type is good. This is definitely a book to be recommended to all members of the medical profession, since to all of us falls the task of dealing with cancer in some form or other in the course of our normal routine work.

F. P. M.

**GYNÆCOLOGICAL ENDOCRINOLOGY.** By P. M. F. Bishop. Pp. 133.

E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 7s. 6d.

THIS book is an excellent introduction to a complicated subject, and one which could be read by every final-year medical student and general practitioner with great benefit. The results of recent work are put forward in a most attractive and easily understood style, and throughout the book the importance of excluding pathology before using hormone therapy is stressed. C. H. G. M.

**PSYCHOLOGICAL MEDICINE.** By Desmond Curran, M.B., F.R.C.P., D.P.M., and Eric Gullmann, M.D., M.R.C.P. Foreword by J. J. Conybeare, M.C., D.M.(Oxon), F.R.C.P. Second Edition. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd.

THIS excellent book has now reached its second edition. Anyone who had the privilege of reading the original book could have predicted a long and useful life for it. The book is a short one, some 240-odd pages, and it will therefore be appreciated that certain chapters have to be frequently rewritten to keep them up to date. The chapters on constitutional factors and psychopathic personalities, affective and hysterical syndromes, have been enlarged and rewritten. The chapter on obsessional psychosis is much more complete and is a valuable addition to the book. Physical methods in treatment of various psychological states have been included.

The book is only claimed to be an introduction to the subject, and it fulfils this claim. It requires careful reading and most subjects have been covered. A list of references is appended, indicating the larger works which should be consulted for more detailed study. The book is enhanced by its illustration of patients, specimens, and diagrams. Dr. Conybeare's foreword once